

## ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

MY WILDERNESS EAST TO KATAHDIN. By William O. Douglas. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York, 1961:  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$  in., 190 pp., 16 line drawings by Francis Lee Jaques, end-paper maps. \$4.95.

Mr. Justice Douglas of the United States Supreme Court is one of the few persons prominent in official Washington who undertake personally to focus attention on conservation matters. This, his latest book, is an example of his personal effort to make us appreciate the nation's wealth of natural beauty and resources and at the same time to show how flagrantly we are despoiling our priceless heritage.

The chapters, 11 in all, are accounts of his visits to well-known wilderness areas, some preserved and others needing preservation, in the United States from Wyoming, Colorado, and Arizona eastward. His writing is lacking in verve and humor; his comments on natural history, though frequent and informative, are as dry as an encyclopedia's. But no one reading a chapter will fail to sense his sincerity and dedication. Seldom does he miss the opportunity to point out the plight of an animal species or the fate in store for a wilderness area unless stern measures are taken. The many fine drawings by Mr. Jaques are a great asset to the book, providing the eloquence which the text lacks.—  
OLIN SEWALL PETTINGILL, JR.

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BIRD DOCTOR. By Katherine Tottenham. Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd. Edinburgh, 1961.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$  in., vi + 162 pp. 19 photos. \$3.00 (from Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York).

Like many of us, the author of this little book acquired more or less accidentally the reputation of being the local "bird doctor" at her home in North Devon, and soon had a procession of injured and orphaned avian guests, from swans to swifts. Unlike many of us, she has made a lengthy and determined effort to develop satisfactory methods of caring for a variety of patients. She has put in writing here, in a thoroughly readable form, her trial-and-error experiences in attempting "to cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always." By no means a complete handbook, "Bird Doctor" still contains a lot of helpful information, particularly about the care of injured and exhausted seabirds. We learn, for instance, that mishandling of waterbirds may interfere with feather buoyancy, that most deaths in captivity, of rescued, injured birds are from pneumonia, kidney degeneration, or heart disease, that feather shafts make the best splints, that gin is better than brandy for sick birds.

Mrs. Tottenham is best known for her dedicated attempt to find ways of caring for victims of oil pollution and the common "wet-feather" problem of waterbirds in captivity. Some of her ideas, especially on bird behavior and its interpretation, may not have wide acceptance and she may, in a few cases, be accused of generalizing from too few examples. But her humor is delightful (the reader will find amusing her description of the problems with mice in the aviary, and her choice of names for pets—for example, Vermintrude for a House Sparrow). Her patience and ingenuity, and her efforts in the field of conservation, are completely admirable.

The book will be useful to all who must occasionally care for birds in captivity. It would be even more useful if the so-called "Index" had page references rather than being just an alphabetical list of the birds in the text, with scientific names.

It is somewhat revealing to read, in bald sentences, the conservation-minded British viewpoint with regard to the American spray program and the future of our wildlife.—

SALLY F. HOYT.